

THE
BAPTIST MAGAZINE.

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Memoir of Mr. Robert Stainer Bestland,

[A Missionary to the Island of Jersey in 1782, who was blind from the age of Nine Months.]

He died at Portsea, January 9, 1811.

NUMEROUS instances prove that the great Head of the Church displays his sovereignty in selecting unlikely instruments to accomplish his purposes of grace and mercy towards miserable sinners. The gifts he bestows on men for the work of the ministry are frequently communicated to those who, in the opinion of many, are *base and weak things of the world*, and despised as such. In this way *he hides pride from man*, and effectually teaches us, that *he that glorieth must glory in the Lord*. An instance of this kind was exemplified in the late Mr. Robert Stainer Bestland, a minister of the baptist denomination, late of Portsea.

Mr. B. was born at Wareham, in Dorsetshire, March 7, 1757. Whatever pleasure his parents felt at his birth, was soon damped by his being seized by that fatal malady, the small-pox. When but nine months old, the eyes of this infant were, by this disorder, closed in darkness; and he never knew how pleasing it is to the eyes to behold the sun.

His mother was a godly woman, a hearer of Mr. Reader, the independant minister, at Wareham. This excellent man, feeling for her affliction in having a blind son, undertook to give him education, and by his care, and instructions he succeeded in imparting much useful knowledge. Through a divine blessing, he was made the honoured instrument of "opening the eyes" of his mind, and through the gospel, of "turning him from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto

God." Of his kind instructor and spiritual father, Mr. B. always spoke in terms of the highest respect.

It is not known at what period his conversion took place, but it is supposed to have been when he was about twelve years of age. In an account of his first convictions, found among his papers, after his decease, it is said, that he had often felt alarmed while hearing the gospel, but the impressions were soon lost. He speaks of going fast in the ways of satan; that he could not exactly tell when he was first effectually wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, as he never knew those strong convictions of sin which many have. "But (he adds) I saw my sins were sufficient in themselves to sink me into the burning lake. I had often times heard of Jesus that he was able, notwithstanding the greatness of my crimes, to wash them all away in the fountain of his blood; having satisfied justice on the behalf of sinners. I now applied to this blest Surety, believing that he died for such vile sinners. Blessed be God for shewing me this place of safety, and for all that consolation I have obtained from being enabled to receive the atonement. By grace I am saved, through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast."

When he was about fourteen he felt strong desires to be employed in the work of the ministry, and soon began preaching, under the patronage of Mr. Reader, in the villages adjacent to Wareham and Pool. His affectionate patron was so well satisfied with his talents and piety, that he had determined to send him to an Independant Academy, and had written letters to obtain admission for him, but an event took place which prevented him from doing that service for his pupil which he had intended. The event referred to was Mr. B.'s embracing the sentiment of *Believer's Baptism*. This was when he was about twenty, and he was soon after baptized at Salisbury by Mr. Henry Philips, pastor of the church now under the care of Mr. John Saffery. Mr. Bestland preached on this occasion, as also when he related his experience to the church. The pleasure and satisfaction with which he was heard, led the church to give him a public call to the ministry, encouraging him to exercise his gifts wherever and whenever he might have opportunity.

From this time he preached at different places as his services were needed. His blindness was the great hindrance to his settlement; as in addition to the difficulty of providing him

constantly with a guide ; his eyes presented a very disagreeable appearance to his hearers.

At the commencement of the year 1781, he applied to that excellent woman, the honour of her sex, and the *Glory of Christ*, the late Countess of Huntingdon, for admission into her College: his letter and the reply of the Countess are preserved; his application was unsuccessful on account of his blindness, as that would prevent his activity in "riding over all England for the supply of her congregations, a service which could not be dispensed with."

His ardent mind now led him to undertake a Mission to the Island of Jersey, which became the scene of his greatest exertions and most extensive usefulness. This must have been in the year 1782, as several letters amongst his papers were written from thence at this period.

The difficulties he encountered in Jersey were very great; he endured great persecution, and was exposed to much danger. In a letter to his brother, dated Jersey, Nov. 1, 1782, he thus writes ; " Since I have been here, I have been involved in great difficulties ; and God only knows when, and in what manner, they will terminate. My bodily health has been considerably impaired ; but blessed be God, it is now re-established. I find I stand in need of wisdom, patience, courage and zeal, to capacitate me for the work in which I am now engaged ; and to bear me through the reproaches, insults, and other disagreeable circumstances, which I might mention, and which I am called to go through. Was it not the cause of God, and the welfare of immortal souls, that lie at stake, I should certainly have relinquished all my attempts, and have contented myself to abide where I should be extricated from things so disagreeable to flesh and blood."

Notwithstanding all these oppositions, *the word of the Lord grew and prevailed*. Many were pricked to the heart, and " some who came to scoff, retired to pray." The circumstance of his blindness, and its being known he had been blind from his birth, caused a great enquiry among the people ; " How knoweth this man letters having never learned ? " An instance of this kind deserves being recorded, as it shews the remarkable ways in which God works to confound sinners, and bring them to the obedience of the faith.

Mr. B.'s friend, Captain Brown, was in Jersey while Mr. B. was there. The captain was preaching for him ; but after he had named his text, and divided his subject, a messenger

came to say the Ship must sail immediately. The captain was consequently obliged to leave the pulpit, and Mr. B. ascended it; and taking up all the particulars of the subject as the captain had stated them, proceeded with the discourse and finished the sermon. A woman present, who had always been of opinion that Mr. B. learned his sermons by heart, and delivered them from strength of memory, was now so convinced of his ability to preach the gospel, and so much surprised that a blind man should possess so much knowledge, that she ever after attended the worship of God, and it is supposed her impressions terminated in her conversion. *How wonderful are his judgements, and his ways past finding out?*

Mr. B. had written letters to many ministers in England to request assistance towards the expenses of repairing and paying for the place of worship which they had purchased. To accomplish this design, which lay very near his heart, Mr. B. travelled through the West of England, from Portsmouth to Plymouth, preaching almost every night. We have not heard the amount of the money he collected, but an anecdote we have been told respecting a person somewhere in Somersetshire proves his preaching was not in vain. A man of very vile character who had determined never to attend at a meeting, was so desirous of hearing a blind man preach, that he broke his resolution. The Lord was pleased to bless this sermon to his conversion. He soon after became a member of the church, proved a very honourable character for many years, and is, perhaps, still living, to attest the truth of the proposition, that *the grace of God which bringeth salvation, teaches us that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world.*

Our readers are, doubtless, expecting to be informed that Mr. B. returned to Jersey, and that he was received with open arms by his little flock. This, however, was never the case. His labours there were ended. How inscrutable are the ways of providence. He laboured, and others entered into his labours. That there was nothing disreputable to himself, in his not returning, is evident from the following extracts of letters sent by his friends in Jersey.—

“ Dear Sir,

“ WE are greatly obliged to you for your kind intentions towards us, the unworthiest of all creatures, of returning to us; but are sorry to inform you that we cannot raise a sufficiency

for your maintenance, as we who have a regard for you, would not desire a better minister than you: many of us having by the blessing of God experienced that God has been with us of a truth. We esteem you as one qualified by the grace of God, to give every one his portion of meat in due season. We can assure you, sir, that many poor souls amongst us are sorry that we shall have no more blessed opportunities of hearing the word of God from your lips, as we do indeed esteem you as one that loves our souls, and in whom our souls delight." From this extract it should seem that Mr. B. had intended to return and that his knowledge of the poverty of the people would not have prevented him. The letter proceeds to state, that, "on account of his loss of sight, he could not be able to go into the villages, as they wished a minister to do;" and that, "though they should be very glad to support another minister to assist him, their circumstances would not admit of it."

Another letter from the same person, dated Jan. 31, 1784, says, "We are greatly obliged to you for all the trouble you have taken to assist and bring us unworthy sinners nearer to God; and if you are not rewarded from us, we unite in prayer that God may reward you. Since your departure from us, we have been in a desolate condition for a long while, not having the gospel of Christ explained to us. But the Lord having taken pity upon us, has through the means of some soldiers, lately come to the Island, sent 'Squire Brackenbury, and his servant Mr. Smith, to preach to us. They are men of great piety and grace, whose labours appear to have been useful."

[To be concluded in our next]

Propriety of avoiding Controversial Subjects.

To the Editor of the Baptist Magazine.

Sir,

A SINCERE wish to see the Baptist Magazine so conducted as to give no just ground of offence to any conscientious and upright Calvinistic Baptist, is my sole motive for calling the attention of your stated contributors and occasional correspondents, to a few remarks. It is well known that the contributors whose names appear on your cover, are not all of one mind on theological subjects. Some of them are generally considered as *high*, while, probably, the major part make no secret of their

being *moderate* Calvinists. The same distinction obtains in our churches.

Now as we have but one periodical "Repository for the Baptists' use" at present in circulation, it appears desirable that it be so conducted that every upright Calvinistic Baptist may read it, if not always with equal instruction, yet without feeling disgust at unfounded, illiberal, and indiscriminate censure, cast on some of his peculiar sentiments, and on those who espouse them. In the course of your former numbers, many pages have been directed against something called *Antinomianism*. I say something so called, because it has appeared to me, that those who have written on the subject, have either not defined it at all, or so loosely as to leave the thinking part of your readers at a loss on whom to fix this brand of infamy. It ought to be known, that among the Baptists there are ministers, who for intellect, morality, piety, indefatigable labor, and usefulness in their respective spheres, may vie with any of the denomination, who yet do not hold the moral law to be the believer's rule of conduct; not because they are disposed to undervalue the law itself, or reject the use of it in the christian ministry; but because they think, as a rule of conduct, the necessity of it, to believers, is superseded by a more complete rule of moral and religious action, contained in the Gospel; a rule, which is there founded on those cogent and invigorating motives, which no one, it is presumed, will pretend are to be deduced from the moral law. Nor can our denomination boast of churches whose members are more uniformly upright in their conduct, or that are more strict in their church-discipline, than are some of those who, on the principle above stated, object to the moral law as a rule of conduct to believers. I cannot help thinking, it deserves to be seriously considered, what important advantage is likely to arise from a prolongation of the controversy on this subject; especially if it be directed against ministers and churches of the above description, who, it is probable, will cheerfully concede to you every thing you can require of believers, as to the *matter* of duty, so that the only bone of contention must be that of mere (unscriptural) phraseology. If it be said, that, not such as I have described, but characters inferior in moral worth, have been the objects of attack, I will only say, that such are likely to be steeled against argument, and as to invective, it will, no doubt, be returned with ample interest.

I would also remark, that as your contributors and readers

entertain different opinions on the duties of the unregenerate, it would, perhaps, be wise to keep the particular points in dispute as much as possible out of sight. Ministers in their pulpits, or in publications, for which they alone are responsible; and christians in general in their private circles, are certainly at liberty to avow and vindicate to the utmost extent, whatever they believe; but in yours, intended for the use of a large body of professing christians, minor subjects should give place to those important doctrines and facts in which all are agreed. This would tend to promote evangelical liberality throughout the denomination, and might prove one mean of accelerating that *General Union* so ardently desired by some of your correspondents.

I am, sir, your's, &c.

H. P.

Remarks on the "Supra-lapsarian Scheme," &c.

(See page 9.)

[To the Editor of the Baptist Magazine.]

Sir,

IMPARTIAL justice requires that a *Supra-lapsarian* be allowed to remark on the piece intitled, "*The Supralapsarian Scheme*," which appears in your first number for the present year. It is doubtful if your correspondent be able to state the scheme with correctness. He says, "The doctrines of this [scheme] *seem to be* as follow; but why not say what they are, and produce his authorities? He adds, "*If this scheme be considered in harmony with itself*;" which leads me to consider what he calls "a fair statement," as a string of *conclusions* drawn from what he supposes to be the scheme, rather than the scheme itself. I see nothing in the "statement" to entitle it to

* From the very comencement of our work, we felt the propriety of the line of conduct recommended by H. P.; and many well-written Papers on the subjects he mentions, as well as on mixed communion, have been laid aside, as not comporting with our plan of avoiding these controversies. The insertion of the piece on *Supra-lapsarianism* was an oversight: the subjoined remarks thereon by H. P. we hope will convince our readers of our impartiality; but we cannot continue the controversy. Respecting "other pages" of which our friendly correspondent seems to complain, we believe they were *intended* to counteract the sentiments of those who will *not* "concede the matter of a believer's duty."

the character of "*fair*;" but several things which prove it to be as *unfair* a statement as could well be given. Supra-lapsarians certainly hold that "God elected his people out of the pure mass;" but then they assert, that the *end* God had in view in election, was, not what this writer insinuates, that his people might be finally and everlastingly *happy*; but *his own glory*. It would also have been but "*fair*" if your correspondent had said, that they maintain that God elected his people as much to be *holy* as to be *happy*. Why this fair feature in Supra-lapsarianism was left out in his statement, he can best inform us. He goes on to say, that "God, as a sovereign, left others, or rather ordained them, though *in the pure mass of creatureship*, also, to fall into sin," &c. To *leave* and to *ordain*, do not convey exactly the same ideas. Supra-lapsarians admit the others were "*left*," but they no more believe they were "*ordained*" to fall than the Sub-lapsarians do. But it is said they were left to fall, "*though in the pure mass of creatureship*:" and what then? Is there therefore unrighteousness with God? Do not even Sub-lapsarians admit, that unless man had been *left* he had not sinned? And will not the admission of this position place them on equally difficult ground of defence with their brethren?

He speaks of the divine decrees of election and rejection as *mere acts of sovereignty*. Is he acquainted with any respectable writer on the Supra-lapsarian scheme, who has given such a representation of those decrees? I much question the propriety of resolving any of the divine counsels or acts into *mere sovereignty*. In the second article of his "*fair statement*" the writer discovers a want, I do not say of integrity, but certainly of correct information.—"The people of God always were in the covenant of grace." Sub-lapsarians must admit this, if they consider that covenant to be properly speaking, an *everlasting* covenant. He says, "The people of God never were under the law." If this be the opinion of Supra-lapsarians, it is to be understood of the people of God as in Christ, for considered as in Adam, they believe they were under the law. "They never fell." As in Christ they never fell, but in Adam they fell equally with others. "God never saw sin in his people." This is true, so far as he always did, and always will behold them in his Son, for thus considered *he hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob*. "God never was angry with his people." If, considered as their everlasting Father, he has loved them with an everlasting love, there is nothing in the position contrary to

truth. "Their ignorance of him is not sinful in them." It would have been too barefaced to have added, their *enmity, rebellion, covetousness, pride &c.* are "not sinful in them but sovereign in him," yet he might have said this upon equally good authority. "*Independent of all means* they shall surely be brought to know him,!!" I do not see how your correspondent when he was penning down this piece of extravagance, was "*keeping TRUTH for his object?*" Nor can he prove it to be a part of the scheme he opposes, that "to attempt to instruct men in the knowledge of God *is taking the work out of God's hand, and denying the work of the Holy Spirit.*" This is such a gross misrepresentation, that I suspect many of your readers will consider it as *intentional*. That "the people of God are eternally justified," must be admitted; by those who believe they were *eternally represented* by Christ. "The people of God never were condemned." On the principle just laid down, this must be admitted; at the same time, it is no less true that, considered as the descendants of an apostate head they "were the children of wrath even as others." "Faith is a believing that I am chosen in Christ;" and if such belief be founded on the work of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification, is your correspondent prepared to prove it is not faith? "No man is condemned *for* not having it." This is an oblique glance at the controversy respecting faith in Christ as the duty of all men who hear the gospel, but the writer ought to know there are Supra-lapsarians who take the *affirmative*, and that some Supra-lapsarians take the *negative* side of the question. "All the promises of God are made to his people, *particularly* those which concern their *final safety.*" q. d. The scheme, of which this is to be considered as "a fair statement," makes very little account of any promises except it be those which expressly assure the people of God of their *final safety*! Promises, which relate to the mortification of sin, and the implantation and exercise of holy principles, are (if what your correspondent insinuates be true) in the Supra-lapsarian scheme, hrown so far into the back ground as to be scarcely perceptible! I would have your readers however to know, that Supra-lapsarians feel as thankful to the Father of mercies for the promises of compleat *personal* sanctification, as for "those which concern their *final safety.*" The fifth article in the "fair statement," the writer heard delivered by a preacher, *ergo*, it makes part of Supra-lapsarian scheme!

On the Three Queries in the Bap. Mag. for January

The query by Cymro admits of an easy solution. The word *Archangel* in Scripture is never used in the plural number, and is applied to *one* being only. If Cymro consult a Concordance, he will find two places in the New Testament, where the Term is introduced, and in both of which, our Saviour, the *only Ruler* of Angels, in all probability, is intended. The scripture therefore authorizes neither ministers nor professors either in their addresses to God, or in their conversations with each other, to apply the name of *Archangel* to any *order* of creatures. That there is a diversity of ranks in the armies of heaven, that there are *Legions* of angels, that there are principalities and powers in heavenly places, a Gabriel who stands in the presence of God, and beings who excelling in strength wield the elements of nature or control the destinies of empires is clearly revealed in the inspired volume. And many good men who use the word *Archangel* in the manner questioned by Cymro, intend simply to mark those holy intelligences of the *highest order*, who in the kingdom of glory shall be the friends and associates of ransomed men.

“A MEMBER of the Church of England,” is desirous of knowing through the medium of this Magazine, on what grounds we differ from other christian denominations on the ordinance of Baptism. The enquirer may be referred to the preceding pages of this very publication for information. Few readers of the Baptist Magazine need to be told, that, among the Baptists, *Believers in Christ, alone*, are considered *subjects* of his visible kingdom; that infants are not admitted to any of his ordinances; and that Baptism is administered, on a confession of faith, by Immersion in water. The querist might be referred to many able Books, from which to learn the state of the Controversy. But we would recommend him, if he be sincerely desirous of knowing and doing his Master's will, on this solemn and lovely institution, to study the New Testament Scriptures in a filial dependence on the promised guidance of the holy Spirit.

“A constant Reader” suggests several topics of important and difficult investigation. Many of our readers, we are persuaded, would be gratified, were these subjects taken up with candour and ability, and steady lights thrown on them from j

dicious applications of Scripture and elucidatory facts in modern church history. It may be allowed us to doubt, whether the Queries themselves are connected with the decision in *Matt. xviii*. The direction in *Matt. xviii*, 16, admits not of extension to all offences which spring up in christian churches. It refers, *exclusively*, to personal offences, to those improprieties of conduct in individuals which affect other members in the same community. The ground on which this doctrine is built is stated simply thus, "if thy brother trespass *against thee*." To *this* case, and to *this case only*, is the rule here referable. There are offences, by which no individual is injured, but through which the community with which the offender is united suffers in reputation, and the cause of Christ is impeded. A church-member is guilty of *Drunkenness*. Is this a trespass against another member? Is private admonition here to be given, and where repentance is confessed, is private remission to be indulged, the offender to be screened, and the offence not to be condemned by the Church? Surely no. If a man openly deny the Divinity or Atonement of our Lord, is he to be indulged with a private admonition? "Them that sin rebuke before *All*, that others may fear." "If any man obey not our word, *Note* that man, and have *no* company with him, that he may be ashamed: yet count him *not* as an enemy."

When there is a rupture between a pastor and his flock, it is not a private offence, and falls not under the cognizance of this law. It is provided against, in some other part of the christian code. But if a dispute take place between a minister and an individual of his charge, *that* ought to be settled according to the letter and spirit of this excellent law in Matthew.

Though we have ventured to suggest that the subjects proposed by "a Constant Reader," are not immediately affected by the law in Matthew, we wish some of our able and candid friends to give them a full and serious consideration. To this discussion, much meekness of wisdom, much experience, familiar acquaintance with recent facts, in the history of our churches, an extended knowledge of the sacred scriptures, a clear view of the *spiritual* œconomy of Christ's kingdom, a mind not biassed by any party, or by any system, or by any local associations, are highly requisite. We invite some of our prudent, and experienced, and affectionate Brethren to send their thoughts on some or all of these difficult subjects.

Reflections on Psalm xxiii. 1.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. A blessed truth indeed! And blessed is the man that can apply this truth unto himself. Whatever condition he may be in, whatever difficulties he may have to go through, and whatever opposition he may meet with, the man that has the Lord Jehovah for his Shepherd, may rise up with confidence, and although an evil heart of unbelief may suggest the contrary, exclaim *I shall not want.*

The pious reader may receive some edification of soul by attending to the *assertion* here made, and the *inference* drawn from it

I. The assertion here made; *The Lord is my Shepherd.* But who is the man that dareth to say so? Where is the person that can speak so confidently? What character does he bear, who on good ground can assert, the Lord is my Shepherd? Undoubtedly, not every one can say so. It would be the most daring presumption in some men to use such a language as this. But the person that has a right to speak after this manner, is one who is savingly acquainted with God, reconciled unto him through Christ Jesus, trusts in him from a lively faith, and loves him with a sincere heart; and moreover, desires to follow him fully as a dear child. Such is the character of the man whose Shepherd is the Lord. How does the Lord answer this metaphorical description? Does he act the part of a Shepherd indeed towards his people? Yes, adored be his name, fully and faithfully. He never takes any descriptive title unto himself, but what he perfectly fills. Is he his people's Father, and does he not graciously act as such? Is he their Husband, and does not his conduct towards them fully make it manifest? And Is he their Shepherd, his providence bespeaks him such? In a word, he is the God of his people, and acts as a God towards them. He infinitely more than fills every relative title.

As the Shepherd, yea, as the infinitely wise, powerful, and faithful Shepherd of his people, 1. The Lord provides for them. He does not leave them to famish. "He maketh them to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth them beside the still waters." They are fed, spiritually fed by him, by the word of his grace, and the institutions of his house. His word is unto them as an extensive land of green pasture, intermingled with the streams of that blessed river, which maketh glad the noble city of God. Hence they grow in knowledge of divine things, and in every christian grace. They go from strength to strength, until at last they reach Zion, the holy hill above.

2. He guides them. The Lord calls his sheep by their names, and they hear and know his voice, and follow his pure footsteps. He directs them in the way in which they should walk: his voice in his word, attended by the influence of his Spirit, is as a word behind them, informing them, "this is the way, walk ye in it." Yea, he draws them, and they chearfully, not constrainedly, run after him. When others are guided and drawn away by the world, self, sin, and satan, God is the guide of his people, even unto death. "He guides them by his counsel, and afterwards receives them to glory."

3. He defends them. It is true they dwell at present in a land where there is a vast number of beasts of prey. Satan that great roaring lion is constantly walking about seeking whom he may devour. But the Lord hath declared respecting his sheep, that they shall never perish, and that no one shall ever pluck them out of his hand. Let the wicked of this world oppose them with their fiercest rage; Let Satan, with all his infernal subtilty and power bring all his camp against them; "they shall never perish." "The eternal God is their refuge. His name is their strong tower, and they, through grace, "run into it and are safe." "They are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto eternal salvation." How reasonable and just then is

II. The inference in the latter part of the passage before us; "I shall not want." No, believer, thou shalt not want provision, guidance and safety, since an all-powerful Jehovah is thy Shepherd. The inference is just when we consider, 1. The promises the Lord has made unto his people. Let us glance at some of them; they will have a tendency to dispel the gloomy fears, and the disconsolating doubts from the christian's mind. "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." "The Lord is a sun and a shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "My God will supply all your need from his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "I will not turn from them to do them good." Are not these exceeding great and precious promises? And has not the weakest saint, who has the Lord for his Shepherd, every rational ground to say, "I shall not want." But, here it may be observed, that the promises here enumerated, and others of the same nature with them, from which the believer forms the conclusion, that he shall not want, regard that

which is good to answer the necessities of the christian, according to the mind of God, (who knoweth what is best for him far better than he doth himself) and not that which may appear good and necessary at some times in his own opinion. The opinion of the child may be wrong respecting his wants; the opinion of the tender Father, undoubtedly, ought to be preferred. The opinion of the patient on his bed of sickness may be very erroneous respecting what may best suit his case; the skilful Physician is the most proper Judge in this matter; and if the patient has any reason to believe that the Physician regards his welfare in his prescriptions, it is just he should submit unto his opinions. The Lord knoweth what we truly want, and he will supply all our wants in his own wise manner, and in his own good time. This appears moreover,

2. From his all-sufficiency and faithfulness to fulfil all his promises unto his people. Believers, you may well say, you shall not want, your God, in a never-to-be-forgotten covenant, is an all-sufficient and a faithful God. He has not promised unto you what he is unable to accomplish. It is true, he has promised to grant great things unto you, and to perform great things for you; but be not discouraged, he is great in power, and all things are possible with him. What cannot God do? It may be said of many things, "with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Let this truth, that God is all-sufficient, strike a thunderbolt of terror into the hearts of all his enemies; and let it produce a well of consolation in the hearts of all his people. Moreover, God is faithful as well as all-sufficient. "He will fulfil his word." Let sceptics laugh, let infidels deny, and let other characters doubt, God will fulfil his word. "He is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Veracity and faithfulness are essential to his being: they are founded in the purity and rectitude of his Nature. His infinite holiness will not permit him to depart from his word. He will magnify his word, whatever others may do of it. Yea, blessed be his adorable name, he has added his oath unto his word; "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation; who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.

Let us seriously enquire, have we any ground to conclude that we are interested in such an high privilege? Is the Lord our

Shepherd? Do we bear the characteristic marks of the sheep of his fold? Are we meek, humble, and useful! If we are such, then let us rejoice amidst all the vicissitudes of this life in the consoling truth, that *we shall not want*.

J. H. DAVIES.

On the Impropriety of Dancing being taught at Religious Seminaries of Education.

THE advertisements which appear on the covers of certain religious periodical publications, from the conductors of different seminaries of education, might lead the serious part of the community to hope that their children would at such establishments, be trained up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord;" but there appears to be an irreconcilable objection to such a hope in those schools, where, in the education of children, dancing is considered as a necessary accomplishment; and where, in the musical exercises of the scholars, songs and other pieces, sung and performed at places of public dissipation, are tolerated.—A religious education, in the utmost extent of Christian liberty, cannot admit of practices so inimical to its self-denying spirit.—Scripture has long ago decided that there can be no concord between "Christ and Belial," between "the temple of God and Idols." The pursuits and pleases of the people of God and the people of the world, are opposed to each other by the strong terms of "light and darkness," "righteousness and unrighteousness;" and the mandate of Christ to his followers is, "love not the world, nor the things of the world; If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Now dancing, it must be acknowledged, is not merely a childish, but also a worldly amusement; and it is ensnaring, inasmuch as it has an alluring tendency to create a false joy, every way opposed to the real prosperity and happiness of the soul: as such, Christian parents are reprehensible in permitting their children to learn it. The disciples of Christ are not to be conformed to the world, but to be "transformed in the renewing of their minds, that they may prove what is the good and acceptable, and perfect will of God," they are to "abstain from every appearance of evil." But are these maxims embraced, and this tenderness of conscience manifested by the temporising advocates for dancing?—Nor will the specious pretence of its being considered, "an indispensable ac-

accomplishment in the genteeler circles of children," be a satisfactory argument in its favor; for where the attainment of an accomplishment endangers the welfare of the soul, it certainly should be relinquished, and "*to pretend not to decide on the question whether the danger does not overbalance the advantage,*" argues either a lukewarm spirit in the cause of Christ, or a strange inattention to the general consequences of this amusement. I have been told that at one of these *professedly* evangelical, but *really* semi-christian establishments, the young ladies are taught dancing by a master from *the Opera House* !!! and yet on the sabbath attend the preaching of the gospel. Such professors surely have forgotten that the religion of Jesus Christ requires its adherents to "*adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.*" If the amusement of dancing could be restricted to the season of childhood, and be practised only at school, under the vigilant eye of its superintendant, and subject to proper regulations, it might be considered an *innocent recreation*, and no objection could reasonably be made against it; but the danger and unlawfulness of the art, lies in its being a qualification for scenes of *after dissipation*, to which if grace prevent not, the heart will be attracted as steel is to the magnet; and it is upon this principle, and upon this alone, that it is to be reprobated and condemned. A few of these consequences are—late hours, a mixed association of the sexes and of character, a liability of the passions to be inflamed and ensnared, a formation of irregular habits, generating a neglect of religious and social duties; together with hasty and imprudent connexions, prodigality in dress, and dissipation of manners. If it be asserted that an easy carriage and a polite address are the ostensible pleas for children being taught to dance, surely these might be obtained by other means. How Christian parents, while they sanction this baneful accomplishment, can at a throne of grace pray, that their children may be kept from "*the path of the destroyer,*" and escape "*the pollutions which are in the world, through lust,*" I am at a loss to determine; and how, if they teach them the church catechism, they can require them to "*renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world,*" while they are affording them an introduction to scenes of dissipation and folly, must be left for them to explain. If it be pleaded, that David danced before the ark, that the timbrel and the dance are mentioned in the Psalms, and moreover that the Wise Man has said, that "*there is a time to dance;*" I reply, dancing in those days was undoubtedly a

manifestation of holy rejoicing, and was very different from the principle that actuates a modern assembly; to derive, therefore, from the *Holy Bible*, arguments in defence of such *unholy practices*, is a sad profanation and perversion of truth. The scripture declares that, "he that followeth vain persons, is void of understanding;" and may not the frequenters of the ball-room be fairly classed under that description of character? are they not for the most part, "lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God?" and are such the suitable companions for children of *pious* parents? let conscience answer the question, and say, whether the religious professor would not tremble, should death suddenly summon him from the ball-room to the judgement bar! Wherefore, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret! unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united." True faith ever purifies the heart and overcomes the world, but while the affections are set "on things on the earth," and not "on things above," apologies for worldly amusements will never be wanting; it therefore becomes the bounden duty of all who have the interest of real religion at heart, and especially the ministers of Christ, to oppose the fallacious arguments of such carnal inconsistent professors. With respect to the practice of permitting children, in their musical exercises, to learn the vain songs sung at the Theatre and other places of public dissipation, it is equally indefensible: it has a tendency to pollute the mind, to banish from it every serious impression, and to attract the imagination and affections to places far more dangerous than houses infected with the plague. And finally, if conductors of seminaries, from a principle of worldly gain, solicit the patronage of the religious public, and so far sacrifice principle to mercenary objects, as to blend in their system of education, sinful amusements with spiritual instructions, such conduct merits reproof, such hypocrisy deserves exposure, and such pretensions call aloud for discountenance from all who are truly serious, and who would wish their children to be trained up in the way in which they should go.

Russell's Essays.

The best Saints have need to guard against the worst Sins.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

1 Cor. x. 12.

THE gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ comprehends, not only divine doctrines to be believed, precious promises to be em-

braced, and peculiar privileges to be enjoyed, but also holy precepts to be obeyed, and serious cautions, as well as solemn warnings, to be conscientiously regarded. We consider that man's taste to be vitiated who is continually craving sweets rather than plain solid wholesome food; so it is in spiritual things, he that can *only* feed upon doctrine, promise, and privilege, has not his senses sufficiently exercised to discern good and evil. Paul certainly preached evangelically. He preached *Christ, warning every man, and teaching every man, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. And addressing real believers of considerable eminence, he drops a serious caution, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

Let us notice the persons addressed, those *that think they stand*—the caution itself, *take heed*; and offer some motives to enforce it.

The persons addressed are those that think they stand, i. e. continue free from great transgressions, from open immorality, &c. because they have not, since their first profession of christianity, openly disgraced that profession. Some persons think they stand, *because they possess superior talents*; doubtless, superior talents are useful often in an eminent degree; they adorn the possessor, but are no security against a fall. Very many have occupied the highest situations in the church, whose abilities have been the theme of admiration, by whom thousands have been charmed, instructed, and edified; yet, alas! superior talents have proved no security against temptation, many have fallen from the pinnacle of honour. While we have the example of Solomon, who with all his stores of wisdom and knowledge, both human and divine, erected altars to dumb idols, surely superior talent can be no security against a fall. Nor are peculiar privileges any security. Witness the peculiar privileges of the people of Israel under the direction of Moses; this Moses attests, in the most forcible manner, God had chosen that nation for his peculiar people, brought them out of Egypt with an high hand and an outstretched arm, with signs and mighty wonders, fed them by miracles, daily guided them with a pillar of cloud and of fire; and while Sinai's mount shook, smoked, and blazed, God spake unto them out of the midst of the fire; they heard the voice of the words, when the ten commandments were delivered—to which were added statutes and judgements. Their privileges were highly and peculiarly striking, and yet from the example of Israel in the wil-

derness, the apostle grounds this caution; Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. *Nor are peculiar enjoyments in religion any security against a fall.* These are highly desirable; to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart, to feel that joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, is heaven begun below; yet while we remember the enjoyments of David, and of Peter, and reflect upon their after conduct, we cannot trust to present enjoyments as any security against a fall.

Again, some persons think they stand because they are of a more happy temper and disposition than many around them; this may be a fact, yet no dependance is to be placed upon this, however desirable. Moses was the meekest man upon earth, yet *Moses fell* for want of meekness. He was once provoked, and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. David's disposition was so tender, that his heart smote him for cutting off Saul's skirt, though Saul was seeking his life; and yet who so cruel and hard hearted as David in the matter of Uriah the Hittite? Hence we are in danger of falling into those sins which are not our easily besetting sins. Nor, in a word, are eminent piety, extensive usefulness, and long standing, any security. Persons of great usefulness have fallen late in life; David was in the decline of life when he fell into adultery and murder. Perhaps some readers may enquire, "Is not this like bringing up an evil report of the good ways of God?" By no means; to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Let us notice the caution itself, *take heed*. The allusion refers to a person walking in an uneven road, where are many impediments or stumbling-blocks; if he walk carelessly, not looking to his path, he is in great danger of falling. As christians, we are always to remember, that the promises of protection and safety are connected with our taking heed, watchfulness, and prayer. Not attending to this occasioned Peter's fall; he was forewarned, but did not take warning. First, he *presumed* upon his own strength; he neglected to watch and pray; he then ventured upon the enemy's ground, i. e. the high priest's hall; and lastly, through cowardice, denied his Lord. Now the opposite conduct to Peter's, ensures safety. Be not high minded, but fear. Constant watchfulness, joined with fear, and a conscientious avoiding the occasions of evil, because God has engaged to keep all his in the way of obedience, will afford security to the believer; nor can all the

powers of darkness cause the weakest saint to fall, while he is taking heed.

Motives to enforce the caution. A fallen man, who lies prostrate, is in a very unsuitable position for walking, or working, or fighting. The christian is to go forward in religion, to make progress; but alas! when fallen in some foul sin, he is gone backward; hence falls are termed backslidings. Nor can we work for God in a fallen state; a single act of disobedience oftentimes puts an end to all active exertions in God's cause. For can such an one, to any good purpose, fight the good fight of faith? one dreadful fall enfeebles the soul, and makes way for successive falls. Take heed, because a fall will produce pain the most accute. David complained of *broken bones*. Peter wept bitterly.

F ———. J. S.

Papers from the Port-folio of a Minister.

The Pomegranate Tree.

"*Nothing but leaves*,"—Mr. Cecil one day walking in the Physic Gardens at Queen's College, Oxford, observed a very fine Pomegranate Tree, cut almost through the stem, near the root. On asking the gardener the reason of this; "Sir," said he, "this tree used to shoot so strong that it bore nothing but leaves, I was, therefore obliged to cut it in this manner; and when it was almost cut through then it began to bear plenty of fruit." The gardener's explanation of this act conveyed a striking illustration to Mr. C's mind, and he went back to his room comforted and instructed by this image.

Cecil's Life

Specimen of the Pope's Curse, Bell, Book, and Candle, on a Heretic.

Issued at Hampreston, Dorset, in the year 1758.

"By the authority of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of St. Peter and Paul, and of the holy saints, we excommunicate, we utterly curse and ban, commit, and deliver to the devil of hell, Henry Goldney, of Hampreston, in the county of Dorset, an infamous heretic, that hath, in spite of God, and of St. Peter, whose church this is, in spite of all holy saints, and in spite of our holy father the Pope (God's vicar here on earth) and of the reverend and worshipful the canons, masters, priests, jesuits, and clerks of our holy church, committed the heinous crimes of sacrilege with the

images of our holy saints, and forsaken our most holy religion, and continues in heresy, blasphemy and corrupt lust. Excommunicate he be finally, and delivered over to the devil as a perpetual malefactor and schismatic. Accursed be he, and given soul and body to the devil, to be buffeted. Cursed be he in all holy cities and towns, in fields and ways, in houses and out of houses, and in all other places, standing, lying, or rising, walking, running, waking, sleeping, eating, drinking, and whatsoever he does besides. We separate him from the threshold; from all the good prayers of the church; from the participation of the holy mass; from all sacraments, chapels, and altars; from holy bread and holy water; from all the merits of our holy priests and religious men, and from their cloisters; from all their pardons, privileges, grants, and immunities, all the holy fathers (Popes of Rome) have granted to them; and we give him over utterly to the power of the devil; and we pray to our Lady, and St. Peter and Paul, and all holy saints, that all the senses of his body may fail him, and that he may have no feeling, except he come openly to our beloved priest at Stapehill,* in time of mass, within thirty days from the third time of pronouncing hereof by our dear priest there, and confess his heinous, heretical, and blasphemous crimes, and by true repentance make satisfaction to our Lady, St. Peter, and the worshipful company of our holy church at Rome, and suffer himself to be buffeted, scourged, and spit upon, as our said dear priest, in his goodness, holiness, and sanctity shall direct and prescribe.

“ Given under the seal of our holy church at Rome, the tenth day of August, in the year of our Lord Christ, one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight, and in the first year of our pontificate.

“ C. R.†

“ 8th of October, 1758, pronounced the first time.

“ 15th of ditto, pronounced the second time.

“ 22nd of ditto, pronounced the third time.”

* At Stapehill there is still a chapel, and a female convent of the order of La Trappe.

† C. R. probably means the Church of Rome.

Obituary.

Mrs. FOSTER.

Mrs. Foster, late of Tring, was the only daughter of Mr. Blain, formerly pastor of the baptist church, at Newmill, near Tring.

The greater part of the following narrative was written by herself.

“ The first serious concern, (says Mrs. Foster) that left any lasting impression on my mind was when

I was about eleven years old : being then at school at Olney with a pious young friend whose earnest prayers, and serious conversation, led me to think something of the concerns of my own soul. She used every evening to pray with me, and one night she asked me to pray, telling me the consequences of living without prayer. I told her, I could not pray ; but from her persuasion, I attempted it in a very feeble and broken manner. I do not remember any thing particular that night, but from that time I felt a very earnest and longing desire that I might be taught how to pray, and what to pray for. Oh ! thought I, if I could but possess a spirit of prayer, and find acceptance at a throne of grace, I should fear nothing that could befall me. I seemed now in earnest to have set my face Zion-ward, and was persuaded in my own mind that all the allurements in the world would never be able to turn my feet aside ; not knowing or believing that my heart could be so treacherous as I have since found it to be.

Religion was now the topic of my conversation ; I saw a beauty and excellence in Religion that I could see in nothing beside. I saw that those, and only those, were happy who were partakers of it ; and earnestly wished that I might be one amongst the number. Satan, who I believe thought he had lost another of his subjects, did not fail to torment me, which he did by various means. I seldom attempted to pray when I was alone without being afraid to turn round, always fearing he was in the room with me. At other times he would harass and distress my mind with hard thoughts of God ; and at times with the most horrid blasphemous

thoughts that he could suggest. So that many times when in prayer, I have been obliged to stop ; and have frequently clasped my hands together, and could say nothing but " Lord, do not suffer me to think hardly of thee, thou knowest that I hate these thoughts ;" which I believe I did from the bottom of my heart, though I had not power to stand against them. I now felt an earnest desire for the salvation of others, nor did I write a letter to a friend but there was something of religion in it.

In this state I continued for near twelve months, after which time my zeal began to abate, and I grew very cold and formal in religion. Private prayer and social meetings seemed more a task than a pleasure, and I was glad when I could frame a plausible excuse to stay away. In this cold uncomfortable state I returned home in the year 1796, very unlike what my letters had given my friends hope to have seen me. No heart for religion—could not bear to converse about experience—and sincerely wished I had never made any profession. The letters I had written seemed as daggers in my soul ; and I once remember destroying one that it never might torment my sight any more. The world stole into my affections and I pursued its vanities with my whole heart, though it was some years before I could join in any sinful amusement without very severe checks of conscience. I continued in this dead state for about eight years, though at times, upon cool reflection, I have been in great distress. I knew I was wrong, and had all through the time a secret hope that the Lord would not suffer me to live and die in that state. These words were for

years upon my mind; *I would that thou wast either cold or hot.*

All this time, though I had no real love to religion myself, I looked upon the people of God as the excellent of the earth, and I think always rejoiced to see any appearance of real godliness in others, though there was so little of it in me.

About the close of the year 1784, I found my mind almost insensibly drawn from the things of this world, and at times I think found some sweet communion with God at a throne of grace. I was enabled to beg that the Lord would again visit my soul with a revival. I saw myself a poor weak creature, unable to do the least good thing to recommend me to the favour of God; and I hope was enabled to cast my poor weak guilty soul at the feet of Jesus, saying with Esther, "If I perish I perish." But after this the Lord was pleased to lead me through a sea of trouble. I fell into such darkness and distress of soul that I was left almost without the least ray of hope. I looked upon myself to be *without hope and without God in the world*, which state of all others I found to be most dreadful. The horrors of hell seemed to stare me in the face, and I did verily believe that the Lord would cut me off and cast me into that lake which burneth for ever and ever.

All this time I was very constant in the means, and loath to miss one opportunity, as these words were at times some little relief to my mind, *I being in the way, the Lord led me, &c.* I saw it was in the use of the means the Lord had promised his blessing, and though I found no comfort in hearing or in prayer-meetings, yet I was kept waiting: and blessed be God I hope I did not wait

in vain. I used frequently to think of those words in *1 Kings xix, 11, 12, And behold the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.* Ah! thought I, I may experience all these horrors and shakings, and my heart remain the same. I thought it was not the work of the Lord, neither had I ever heard that small still voice. I was afraid the distress of my mind would render me incapable of attending to the concerns of my family; nor could I tell my distress to any one, till one morning Mr. Seymour called, and though I depend not upon impressions, yet I think the hand of the Lord was in it, for it certainly was a word in season to my soul. He told me he had felt himself condemned that he had never spoken to me particularly about the things of God. That it was so impressed on his mind that he could not sleep the past night. That he told his wife of it, and said, if he was spared till morning, he would wait upon me; he said I had been a hearer of the word for many years, but he wished to know whether I had ever felt its power, as hearing alone was not sufficient. I was glad of an opportunity to open my mind, and candidly told him the whole truth. He then told me how it was impressed upon his mind, and said all that he could to encourage my weak faith. I thought I saw the hand of the Lord in it, and for a little while felt that peace in my soul I had been a stranger to. It brought

me on my knees before the Lord; and oh what joy and gratitude did I feel that the Lord had sent his servant to seek out poor unworthy me. I was enabled to take it as a token for good from the Lord, and thank him for it as such; and I meditated with much pleasure on the words of Manoah's wife, *Judges* xiii, 23.

In the evening my distress again returned in measure. I thought I was a Hypocrite. I had spoken to Mr. Seymour and given him some reason to hope I was a partaker of grace, and he would perhaps pray for me as such; when at the same time I was *in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity*. I was very sorry I had spoken to him, and was determined in my own mind not to say any thing more to any one, lest they should have a better opinion of me than I deserved. This I am persuaded was a temptation from the enemy, that I might be kept silent. But from this time many of the dear people of God conversed with me; and though I could say nothing myself, yet I loved to hear what the Lord had done for others. Many wished me publicly to follow the Lord, and let the world see on whose side I was; but I had still many doubts whether the Lord had ever called me, and many fears lest after all I might be left to fall into some gross sin, and so bring a disgrace upon the cause; and though I was thoroughly convinced of believer's Baptism, and used often to think of what Christ says to his disciples, *If you love me keep my commandments*, yet I wanted a clearer manifestation that I did indeed love the Lord. For this I prayed and waited some months. Though the vision tarry it is worth waiting

for; indeed so I found it to be. One Sabbath evening about last January, Mr. Seymour took for his text the words that first comforted me, *Judges* xiii, 23. I was enabled to see that the Lord had shewn me such things that he did not shew to the world at large. I think the Holy Spirit did *take of the things of Jesus and reveal them* to my soul in such away that I shall never forget. I no longer doubted whether I did love the Lord, but was enabled to say, *Yea and I count all things but dung and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*"

Soon after this she joined the Baptist Church at Tring, under the Pastoral care of Mr. Seymour, of which she continued an honorable member till the Lord removed her to the Church triumphant. The affliction which terminated in her death became alarming in July 1811. In the first night of which she thought the Lord was about to take her away, but was then very dark and distressed in her soul; sorely harassed with the thought that all her religion was a delusion, and that she should go to hell after all. But the Lord soon removed this distress, and gave her a sweet frame of mind, which continued almost uninterrupted during the remainder of her affliction. In a short time after this blessed change she said "I have not only one, but many promises brought to my soul." When her sufferings were mentioned, she replied "Rest will seem the sweeter." And frequently repeated the following lines,

Though sharp be the conflict
 'Twill cease before long,
 And then O how pleasant
 The conqueror's song.

At one time she said, "O that

Death may be the spiritual of some of the family, I should think it worth dying for. "I would I sooner the Lord should take me than one of you." At another time, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

"There we shall see his face,
And never never sin;
There from the rives of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

She experienced much support from the words of our dear Lord John xvi. 22, *I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.* She said she had been comforted with the presence of Christ and doubted not but she should be again. At another time she lamented that through weakness of body, she could not do so much as she wished to the honour of God, and of his blessing to her. But she felt assured that the Lord would not forsake her, as it respected bodily pain, than she should be enabled to bear. She said she trusted the Lord faithful to his promise, that *as her day her strength should be*; that she did not have been without this blessing for all the world; that she knew not what she should now do without religion; and that she had been much happier since she felt the power of religion than before. To a friend standing by she said, "I wish you may receive the same consolation and happiness in the prospect of death that I do;" adding, "but it is the time to evince whether repentance is sincere." At another person she said, "If I wish to die the death of the just, unless you live the life of the just, that wish is vain." At another time her husband, seeing her a little revived, said, "My

dear, if it were the Lord's will to raise you up again, should you not be glad to stop a little longer with us?" To which she answered, "If the Lord should take me this night, I should be happy to go, and if he should spare me longer, I should be happy to stay; I am clay in his hands." At another time, "I am like a ship laden, only waiting for a fresh breeze to take me into harbour." Thus she continued in the full exercise of her faculties to the last day of her life; and in the morning of her departure, the Lord was better to her than her fears, as she had experienced some fear of the parting stroke, though not of the consequences. But she gently drew her breath shorter and shorter, till without a struggle, she fell fast asleep in Jesus, on Saturday morning Nov. 15, 1811, in the 28th year of her age.

Mr. ANDREW SWANSTON.

The subject of this memoir was the eldest son of the Rev. John Swanston, minister of the associate congregation of Kinross, North Britain, sometime professor of divinity under the associate synod. After having acquired the knowledge of the Latin language at the grammar school of Perth, he attended the University of Edinburgh, and in the progress of his education distinguished himself by a love of literature, and attention to his studies, and a capacity for improvements in useful knowledge. When he had finished his preparatory studies, he entered on the study of theology, which he prosecuted under the direction of the Rev. John Brown of Haddington, who conceived a high idea of his talents and qualification for the service of God in the gospel of his Son. Having

gone through the usual course of theological studies, he was admitted to trial for license before the associate Presbytery of Dunfermline, and by the discourses he delivered, gave the highest hopes of his future usefulness. In the course of his trials, he was led to reflect on the awful importance of the ministerial office, and the indispensable necessity of personal religion to his undertaking it, either with safety to himself, or benefit to the church of Christ. These reflections issued in deep convictions of his own unworthiness, and awful apprehensions of divine wrath. His distress of mind was inexpressible, and threatened for some time the dissolution of his frame. All thoughts of commencing a preacher were now abandoned and absorbed in the query, *What shall I do to be saved?* The terrors of the Almighty distracted his soul, and drove him to the most desperate conclusions. He would sometimes abstain from prayer and other religious duties, from an apprehension that, by engaging in them, he would only incur the guilt of profanity. He was afraid to look into the bible, for he imagined there remained nothing for him, but a fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation. Some gleams of hope, however, would at times break in upon his mind from the riches of divine mercy, and the grace and all-sufficiency of Christ; but though the distress of his soul became less violent, he continued for a considerable time in a disconsolate state. The Lord, however, interposed for his relief, by giving him such a discovery of his glory in the face of Jesus, as dissipated his fears, and filled him with joy and peace in believing. This happy alteration in the state of his mind is acknow-

ledged by him in a letter friend, dated Dec. 4, 1778, which the following is an extract from: "My dear friend, you know the desperate conclusions I was on some occasions, to drag against myself, and how poor I was in them; yet through the goodness of God, I have lived to see that they were groundless, however defective my past experience or present exercises may be, I am fully convinced that it is my duty to believe, that through the grace of God, I shall be saved even as others. I doubt not that what I have mentioned will give you real pleasure, and I will be disposed to glorify God in me." In this faith he continued through his life.

It was not long after the above period that he was prevailed upon to accept of license to preach the gospel. Mr. Swanston had been long employed as a school teacher, when it was evident that he was very highly esteemed by all who came within the reach of his instructions. The assembly of Perth, after giving a few trials of his gifts, unanimously called him to be Minister, and had the prospect of enjoying the benefit of his stated ministration. The pastoral relation between him and them, however, never took effect, for at this time he began to question the divine authority of the Presbyterian church government, and length gave up all connexion with the secession. Not long after he embraced the views of the Independent prædobaptists, and was admitted a member of their community. During his life he retained his characteristic views of the Christianians, and employed himself in every found opportunity, in promoting the gospel of the kingdom. In this service he may be said

len a sacrifice, for it was when he was employed in it that he caught a severe cold, from which he never recovered. His constitution, which was always delicate, soon exhibited strong symptoms of a consumption, and his friends soon beheld his dissolution fast approaching. He died at Glasgow, on the 15th of November, 1784, in the twenty-third year of his age, expressing an entire resignation to the will of his heavenly Father, and a confident expectation of future felicity; with great pleasure he repeated these words, *It is a faithful saying—Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* "All well, all is well," were the last words he was heard to utter.

His character must be still fresh in the remembrance of those who had the happiness of being acquainted with him, but for the sake of others, the following delineation of it may not be unnecessary. His understanding was commonly acute, clearly apprehending divine truths in their various relations and consequences. His powers of discrimination were strong, by which he readily perceived what was proper to be added or omitted, in the illustration of his subject. His luminous conceptions of divine truths enabled him to express them in language once perspicuous and forcible. His taste was just, and capable of giving elegance to his compositions; if this had been the object of his study. He was cautious in admitting religious principles, while he perceived not the evidence of their truth, but when the evidence presented itself to his mind, he was resolute in adhering to them, and ready to profess them at the expense of all that was dear to him. To the authority of God, speaking in the scrip-

ture, he paid an implicit obedience, but he would not suffer human authority to dictate to him in matters of religion. *One is your Master, even Christ,* was a saying which he held in profound veneration. The love of Christ in redeeming him by his blood, appeared marvellous in his eyes, strongly affected his heart, and obtained a commanding influence over his conduct. To the honour of his Redeemer, he was ready to make the most expensive sacrifices. Things not seen and eternal were perceived by him in a strong and impressive light, gave a noble elevation to his mind, and made him look down with holy indifference on the honours and pleasures and advantages of the world. His manner of life plainly declared that he sought another and better country, and few of the saints have attained to that degree of heavenly-mindedness, which was conspicuous in his conversation. In his social intercourse, he was distinguished by a suavity of manners, which was peculiarly engaging; modest, affable, polite, gentle, and amiable; he never failed to rise in the esteem and affection of those with whom he conversed. His great humility made him respect the sentiments of others who were inferior to himself in understanding, while his happy talent of seizing openings for introducing agreeable and useful hints, or improving on those of others, rendered his conversation at once entertaining and edifying. In rational, moral, and religious conversation, he greatly delighted, and no one retired from his company, without feeling pleasure, or reaping improvement. Mr. Swanston's relations published two volumes of his discourses, merely with a view to diffuse the

savour of the knowledge of Christ among mankind. Upon a careful perusal of them, it may be justly said, the sentiments throughout are scriptural, judicious, and strictly evangelical; the style perspicuous, and the arrangement accurate. Every where an earnest desire is manifested to advance the interest of experimental and practical godliness. Those who read them with a view to edification will be equally pleased and instructed.

W. TAYLOR, Esq.

On Lord's-day, December 1, 1811, died Willam Taylor, Esq. of Newgate Street, London, having entered his 83rd year. He came to London in the year 1750, and was the last person baptized by Mr. WILSON, pastor of the church in Little Prescot Street. Once, and only once, he sat down at the Lord's table with that excellent minister. He became a deacon of the church soon after the ministry of our late venerable friend, Mr. BOOTH, commenced, and continued an honourable and useful member through a period extending beyond three-score years.

He was one of the Treasurers of *The Particular Baptist Fund*, and intimately connected with several other very important charities in London. But he has im-

mortalized his name as the Founder of *The Academical Institution at Stepney*.

Being a single man, and having no family claims upon him, he left nearly the whole of his property, which was very considerable, to charitable Institutions.

He was buried on Monday, Dec. the 9th, at the meeting-house *Maze Pond*. Mr. BIRT, of Rotherhithe, who was then supplying the church at Prescot Street, delivered the address on the interment. His funeral sermon was preached on Lord's-day afternoon, Dec. the 22nd, from *Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying*, &c. by Mr. NEWMAN, of Stepney.

The patriarchal simplicity of his manners endeared him to those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. As a christian, he maintained, by the grace of God, a very steady course, never much elevated, nor much depressed. At his last affliction, his profound piety, and serene submission, were eminently conspicuous and edifying. As a public spirited patron of piety and learning, he will hold a distinguished place in the annals of the denomination to which he belonged, while his memory will be cherished by many, particularly in the metropolis, of all denominations.

ACCOUNT OF RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS.

Report of the Committee of the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews; together with Subscriber's names; Auxiliary Committees; the Correspondence relative to a propos-

ed Public Controversy; a Statement respecting Mr. Catariv and a Catalogue of the Library. Black, Parry, &c. 2s. 6d.

Wearied with contemplating the violence of Ambition, and

struggles of its victims, in these eventful times, the believer turns his attention to the great Cause of God in this wretched world. Here he finds an increasing source of gratification, in reviewing the unexampled exertions of the Christian Public, for the purpose of diffusing the savour of the knowledge of Christ, in every line through which their influence can be made to emanate, and by every means which its widely extending circle can embrace.

The various missions to the heathen, which have been established in the last twenty years, have called forth the latent zeal of the religious public, to the adoption of measures at home, from which we anticipate the most beneficial results. Among these *signs of the times*, favourable to the cause of Christianity, the labours of the Society for promoting its influence among the Jews, are deserving of special regard.

For the information of our readers, we extract the principal heads of this Report of their proceedings.

The number of children admitted into the school, since the commencement of the institution, has been *sixty five*; twenty-four girls, and forty-one boys; *four* of whom have died; and *five* have been removed by their parents. Forty three have been added since the publication of the second report. The greater part of these children have been rescued from the lowest state of moral degradation, and are now placed under circumstances most favourable to their present and eternal welfare.

Of these children three have been put into the printing-office, with a view to their instruction in a useful branch of business, by which they may procure a sub-

sistence. A fourth having discovered some promising talents has been placed in a respectable family, for the purpose of being educated as a teacher. Three boys, of whose abilities and piety good hopes have been entertained, have been put under the care of a clergyman, with a view of fitting them for the office of missionaries to the Jews: and the committee state that they have already made considerable progress in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

At the last annual meeting, *twenty five* persons were received into the christian church by baptism: and at this present meeting, *ten* were added to their number—*fourteen are adults, and twenty are children.*

The employment of the Jews, who may either be destitute of support, or be suffering from the violence of persecution, being a matter of great necessity, it has been judged expedient to establish a manufactory for spinning cotton, by which, without much previous instruction, many may be enabled to provide a maintenance for themselves, who must otherwise have been either supported by the society, or left, through a want of the necessaries of life, to return to the bosom of their own benighted church and people.

A printing-office also has been established on a considerable scale. A specimen of their printing is already before the public, in a new edition of Van der Hooght's Hebrew bible, edited by Mr. Frey.

An evening lecture to the Jews, is preached by Mr. Frey, with other weekly services, at the Jews chapel: besides which a lecture is preached in the episcopal chapel, in Ely Place, by ministers of the established church. Lec-

tures to the Jews have also been established at Bristol and Chatham.

At an early period of the institution it became an object, to which the attention of your committee was directed in a very peculiar manner, to collect a library, consisting of all those works on Hebrew literature which are of highest repute among the Jews, and are most nearly connected with the Jewish and Christian controversy. These books are, for the most part, extremely scarce and rarely to be met with; and, from the writings of Bishop Kidder and others, it should seem, the Jews themselves have at former periods, spared no pains to remove them out of the reach of christians.

The Bishop says,—“The Jews now in England have been observed, of late years, when a learned christian has died, and his books have been exposed to sale, to buy the whole collection of Jewish books that have been left, and consequently hinder the christians from making use of these weapons against them.”

The committee have determined to publish an entirely new translation of the New Testament, in pure biblical Hebrew, using as much as possible the language of the Pentateuch; and where the vocabulary of that fails, the canonical books in succession.”

From the appendix we subjoin a very curious paper, affording incontrovertible evidence of the distressed state of the Jews and describing a custom among them not generally known.

Since the commencement of the London Society, the Jews, by whom the paper, now inserted was published, have established among them-

selves a Society for visiting and relieving their poor and sick members. To understand the scope of that paper, it is necessary for the Committee to state the opinion of the Jews in respect of deceased persons, who, though considered as faithful Israelites, are, on their death, subjected to purgatory,—the duration of which can alone be shortened by the pious offices of surviving friends. These are accustomed, on the decease of a member of their family, to have a lighted taper at the head of the body, placing near it a bason of water and a clean towel, that the soul may have an opportunity of cleansing itself from its defilements. So sacred is this ordinance esteemed amongst them, that a neglect of it, except in cases of extraordinary poverty, would subject an Israelite to excommunication from the synagouge.

It sometimes however happens that the property of individuals does not suffice for the purchase of these trifling articles; and it should seem that the association of the Jews, who published the following paper, intended to meet the necessities of their brethren, and to hold out an inducement to them to continue in their communion; thus affording a melancholy view of the extreme blindness, which, as the apostle tells us, has happened to Israel; and a strong evidence of the urgent necessity here is for the utmost exertions of the London Society.

“With the sanction of the chief Rabbi.

“God has left us a remnant in the superb city of London; may he thus continue to add unto us, until Shiloh come. Amen.

“We hereby make known, that we, being seventy in number, have undertaken to establish an important matter for the sake of heaven, and for the benefit of that class of poor, who often die in the streets, through some illness, or infirmities of age, having no friend, much less family to take care of them, at such a time. An instance of this happened on Wednesday, Parshath Vayearah. One of the above mentioned class had been ill for many days, unknown

to any body; but it came at last miraculously to the knowledge of some of our brethren, the seed of Abraham, and we immediately adopted that measure, whereby we are ever distinguished from other nations, viz. bestowing charity. We maintained him to the day of his death, which happened a few days after our discovery; and after his death we went to his funeral; said prayers for his soul for the first seven days, and had likewise *a light burning for him*. From that period, we joined in forming a society for the relief of such. It happened, moreover, on Friday, the 11th of Adar the first, that we were informed of a pious man, called Rabbi Jacob, who had lain many nights in the street, before the door of Mr. Cox, Petticoat Lane. We ordered him to be taken into a room, which we had hired for that purpose, where we had all due attendance till his death, which happened on Wednesday, the 15th of Adar the second, when he was buried in due form. Therefore, we hope that this will be taken into consideration, and will tend to strengthen our Institution. Surely by doing so we shall keep the following command—*after the Lord your God shall go walk*. Then will the Lord comfort Zion, and send the true Redeemer. Amen."

Some other particulars in the correspondence of the committee are not less interesting than what we have extracted. We hope the circulation of the Report will engage the public attention to the object of the Society, and increase both their zeal and their ability for future exertions.

On the Discouragements and Supports of the Christian Minister. *A discourse delivered to the Rev. James Robertson, at his Ordination over the Independent Church at Stretton, Warwickshire.* By Robert Hall. Button.

The bare mention of a discourse from the pen of this author is sufficient to lead most of our readers to anticipate something in-

teresting in no common degree; his pulpit eloquence is of a class to which no fame can be added by our commendation. We shall therefore content ourselves with sketching out a brief analysis of the sermon, which appears to have been subsequently delivered at the anniversary of the Academical Institution at Stepney.

From the text, 2 Cor. iv. 1. *Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not*, the author takes occasion to investigate the *discouragements* and the *supports* of the ministerial office.

The *discouragements*, he states, arise, in part from the nature of the office itself, being appointed for the purpose of converting souls to God, and conducting them in the path to eternal life. This he elucidates by the following considerations; 1. The minds of men are naturally indisposed for the reception of divine truth. 2. The very attempt to produce that humiliating sense of unworthiness and weakness, which is essential to a due reception of the gospel, will frequently excite disgust, should it terminate in no worse consequences. 3. If you should be successful in awakening a salutary concern in the breast of your hearers, and exciting them to enquire what they must do to be saved, fresh difficulties await you. To these difficulties, which arise from the nature of the work, abstractedly considered, the author adds many others, modified by a variety of circumstances, and resulting from the diversity of temper, character, and situation, which prevail in our auditory. From this section we indulge ourselves with a short extract.

Whatever the mode of address, or whatever the change of topics, there are two qualities inseparable from

religious instruction ; these are *seriousness* and *affection*. In the most awful denunciations of the divine displeasure, an air of unaffected tenderness should be preserved, that while with unsparing fidelity, we declare the whole counsel of God, it may appear we are actuated by a genuine spirit of compassion. A hard and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God, is not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficacy. If the awful part of our message which may be stiled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight on our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand and faltering lips ; and we may then expect them to realize its solemn import, when they perceive that we ourselves are ready to sink under it. Of whom I have told you before, said St. Paul, and now tell you *weeping*, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. What force does that affecting declaration derive from those tears ! An affectionate manner insinuates itself into the heart, renders it soft and pliable, and disposes it to imbibe the sentiments, and follow the example of the speaker. Whoever has attended to the effect of addresses from the pulpit, must have perceived how much of their impression depends upon this quality, which gives sentiments comparatively trite, a power over the mind beyond what the most striking and original conceptions possess without it.

Near akin to this, and not inferior in importance, is the second quality we mentioned, *seriousness*. It is scarcely necessary to remark, how offensive and unnatural is every violation of it in a religious discourse, which is, however, of wider extent than is generally imagined, including not merely jesting, buffoonery, and undisguised levity of every sort, but also whatsoever in composition or manner, is inconsistent with the supposition of the speaker being deeply in earnest ; such as sparkling ornaments, far-fetched images, and that exuberance of flowers which seems evidently designed to gratify the

fancy, rather than touch the heart. When St. Paul recommends to Timothy that *sound speech which cannot be condemned*, it is probable he refers as much to the propriety of the vehicle, as to the purity of the instruction. There is, permit me to remind you, a sober dignity both of language and of sentiment, suited to the representations of religion in all its variety of topics, from which the inspired writers never depart, and which it will be our wisdom to imitate. In describing the pleasures of devotion, or the joys of heaven, there is nothing weak, sickly, or effeminate : a chaste severity pervades their delineations, and whatever they say appears to emanate from a serious mind, accustomed to the contemplation of great objects, without ever sinking under them from imbecility or attempting to supply a deficiency of interest, by puerile exaggerations and feeble ornaments. The exquisite propriety of their representations is chiefly to be ascribed to their habitual seriousness ; and the latter to their seeing things as they are.

These elevated sentiments are followed by some judicious and discriminating remarks, on the more private or *visiting* part of a minister's engagements.

We are then directed to a pleasing contemplation of the *Supports* by which these Discouragements are balanced. 1. The [ministerial] Office is of divine institution. 2. The materials of our work are ready furnished to our hands, and, at the same time of a nature admirably adapted to our purpose. 3. [The Gospel œconomy] is the dispensation of the Spirit. 4. The dignity and importance of the profession, and 5. The Reward that awaits the faithful Minister.

We could willingly copy the whole of the animated close, but our limits forbid.

No doubt but most of our ministering brethren will make the whole sermon their own,

Village Sermons; or short and plain Discourses, for the use of Families, Schools, and Religious Societies. By George Burder, volume the sixth, containing thirteen Sermons on the Divine Perfections.

We well remember the general acceptance which the first productions of Mr. Burder, under the above title, obtained from the religious public, and particularly from persons who led the devotions of Village Worship. We have had many occasions to rejoice in their usefulness, and we believe that the public estimation of Mr. B.'s Village Sermons has grown with their growth, and increased with their number. The present addition to that fund of instruction, so peculiarly adapted for Village Assemblies and Sunday Schools, is fully entitled to a similar reception. The importance of the subjects—the scriptural character of the sentiments, and the simplicity of the style, well adapted for general usefulness, in the former volumes, are happily preserved in the present. We have only to observe that as the present volume presupposes some acquaintance with divine things, in the reader or hearer, it would be advisable that its use be preceded by that of the others.

We are glad to understand that the Author intends to follow the present volume with two others, so as to make a set of one hundred and four plain Discourses—

Scripture Directory; or an attempt to assist the Unlearned Reader to understand the General History and leading Subjects of the Old Testament. By Thomas Jones, Curate of Creaton. 12mo. . 150. 2s. 6d. boards. Seely. 11.

This little volume is written on a good plan; it presents us with a complete compendium of every Book of the Old Testament, the order and leading subjects of each, and a short comprehensive commentary, in a new and attractive form.

We regret that we cannot pass an unqualified encomium on a valuable manual, so well calculated for general usefulness, had it been happily free from the *sectarian* representations which so often disfigure high church productions. We have frequently doubted the fairness of those *Dissenters* who are fond of exhibiting Daniel, Shadrach and his brethren, our Lord and his Apostles, as their forerunners in *Dissent* from established forms. That *they* were Dissenters may be literally true, and yet we hesitate as to the use of such a statement, when Christian Brethren are controverting minor differences.—What then will our readers say to the following Remarks, introduced into a sort of Prefatory Syllabus of the two Books of Kings? “Ten tribes under Jeroboam, *dissented from the established church* and the government which Jehovah had ordained, and formed a religion and a government more congenial to their own depraved minds.”

But there is another passage which particularly arrested our attention, and on which we feel it our duty to make some remarks. From the Book of Exodus the Author professes to learn that the *whole Nation of Israel were formed into a CHURCH*. To illustrate this he would have us believe that God's Covenant with Abraham was the Covenant of Grace made with him in Christ; and contained in it all spiritual blessings—that Abraham's Covenant is still in

force under the Gospel—that *circumcision* was the seal of the Covenant of Grace made with Abraham in Christ, and not of the temporal covenant made on Sinai—that the *whole nation* of Israel received this seal of the covenant of grace, and so God established a National Church—that “All their *children* were admitted into that national church and this church was under the covenant of grace made with Abraham in Christ. We are this day under Abraham’s Covenant, though the seal is changed into one of a milder nature. Let us abide by the rule and order which God hath established; for there alone can we find safety.”

This is not quite the style in which we have heard the worthy Curate of Creaton pour forth his manly eloquence upon the Covenant of Grace, when discoursing in his parish church. At such times he would enlarge upon its excellence, as securing to *all* who are interested in it, effectual calling, personal sanctification, and individual perseverance in the way of holiness unto eternal life. That must surely have been a different covenant from the one which admitted the *whole nation* of Israel into it, not excepting the ten tribes, who afterwards became Dissenters, and whose kings “were all idolaters, and most of them monsters of iniquity.”

A few plain thoughts may perhaps contribute to unravel this matter of the covenant with Abraham, so apt to be enveloped in confusion by a class of writers who want to make it subservient to their system. Things that differ should be *distinguished*. The covenant of grace was made with Abraham and his *Seed*, that is, Christ. (*Gal. iii. 16.*) Sepa-

rate from the consideration of temporal inheritance and the eternal privileges of the Jewish economy, it does not appear that Abraham’s interest in this covenant was different from that of any other believer. It was manifestly discovered to him than it had been to any of his predecessors, and his faith in it placed him at the head of the believing world, as the pattern of believers. But circumcision was evidently not a seal of the same *grace* to his posterity—indeed, we doubt whether it can be properly called a seal of any grace to any one—it appears to us to have been the seal of a *fact*, namely, the *righteousness of faith*, as opposed to the righteousness of works, in the matter of acceptance with God. The whole nation received this seal, and became thereby intitled to the ordinances of that dispensation, which were the *Shadows of good things to come*, but to which no other people had any right to be admitted.

It should also be observed that he who formed the *national church* of the Jews, if such it may be called, has long since completely dissolved it; nor do we read that he ever commissioned his servants, under the new economy to set up another. They were to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel indiscriminately to every nation, or to strangers who might belong to any nation. Under this *ministration of the Spirit*, they required evidence of *spiritual* affections before admission to its ordinances. We hear nothing of that *Seal* upon which the advocates for infant baptism place so much reliance, except the most unequal assertions that it was abolished, without so much as a hint of another having been appointed.

its room. To us there appears an occasion for such an appointment—national holiness being gone away, and the Christian miracles opened to all the world; sign of national privilege of access to the exhibitions of a spiritual fact was no longer wanted.

The attempt to introduce carnal characters into relations purely spiritual, has produced a world of confusion in the christian œconomy. The order of the gospel, as set forth in precept and in history, is preaching—faith—baptism—church fellowship in all the ordinances of christian worship and discipline. In this order, it must be admitted, there is a beauty and fitness which speaks to the heart; there is no attempt to amalgamate materials that will not combine together. The author's admonition, therefore, strikes us very forcibly on this point, *Let us abide by the rule and order which God hath established; for there alone can we find safety.*

As Mr. Jones is surrounded by many respectable dissenting congregations, and his book is calculated for general usefulness in the religious world, in which it would principally circulate among those who object to the statements on which we have offered our remarks, we hope these exceptionable passages will be expunged in a future edition.

An interesting and instructive Dialogue between a Father and his Son. Wilkins, Derby, 1½d. or 8s. 6d. per 100.

An Address at the Administration of Baptism. Same printer. 8s. per 100.

These little Tracts are part of a series printed for the General Baptist Religious Tract Society. The former of them is a well-sustained conversation, which a

sprightly candid young man may be supposed to have had with his Father on returning from seeing the Ordinance of Baptism administered in a river. The Son relates the arguments used by the Minister, at the water side, which are chiefly drawn from the Common Prayer Book.

The latter Tract is a pertinent address, much in the style usually adopted on such occasions; 1. To those who revile the Ordinance of Baptism; 2. To those who trust to their having been sprinkled in Infancy; 3. To enlightened Professors of Religion; 4. To persons who have already been baptized. 5. To the candidates on the occasion.

A Dialogue between two Friends on the awful guilt and dreadful folly, of neglecting eternal concerns, on account of the inconsistencies that are sometimes visible in the professors of Religion. Wilkins, Derby. 1½. or 8s. per 100.

This is a very excellent Tract, on a very important subject; The offences which the misconduct of Professors occasions among the profane, and even among the more seriously disposed, part of the irreligious world.

This Societies Tracts may be had at Mr. Button's Paternoster Row.

The Nations imploring the Word of Life; *A Sermon for the Benefit of the Bible Society; interspersed with numerous extracts, chiefly from the Society's reports and correspondence, so arranged as to exhibit a general view of the state of the world, with regard to the want of Bibles, and the exertions making to supply that want.* By the Rev. John Scott, A. M. Seeley and Hatchard. 1s.

To many readers this publication will prove very acceptable, as it affords a more intelligible and concise exhibition of various interesting particulars relative to the Bible Society, and the wants which it is intended to supply, than can be obtained from any other source of five times the cost. The profits will be given to the Bible Society.

Religious Books lately Published.

A Defence of Modern Calvinism: containing an Examination of the Bishop of Lincoln's Work, entitled a 'Refutation of Calvinism.' 1 handsome vol. 8vo. price 12s. By Edward Williams, D. D.

A Family Bible, containing the Sacred Texts of the Old and new Testaments, with the Apocrypha; illustrated by Marginal References, and the most useful explanatory Notes from the Bible of Dr. Dodd, and from the Works of other celebrated Divines. Part I. (to be continued monthly) embellished with beautiful Woodcuts, illustrative of the Manners of the times. This Work will be completed in 35 Monthly Parts, and will contain 100 elegant Designs by Thurston and Craig, cut in Wood by Bewick, Branstone, and other eminent Artists, forming two handsome quarto volumes, 2s., and on superfine royal paper, 3s.

2. Just published, an octavo volume of Letters by the Rev. James Hervey, author of Theron and Aspasio, elegant, interesting, and evangelical, illustrative of the author's amiable character, and developing many circumstances of his history not generally known, never before printed.

THEOLOGICAL NOTICE.

1. In the Press, a new edition of Dr. Evans's Sermons on the Christian Temper, in 2 vols. 12mo.

The Rev. Thomas Wint, author of a commentary on Daniel, has in the press, Christian Ethics, consisting of Discourses on the Beatitudes, &c. in two octavo volumes.

4. The Rev. J. Nightingale, author of a Portraiture of Methodism, is engaged on a Portraiture of the Roman Catholic Religion with an Appendix, containing a Summary of the Laws against Papists, and a Review of the Catholic Question of Emancipation.

5. Mr. Styles has in the press a volume of Sermons, which will include his Funeral Sermon for Mr. Spencer.

We are informed that there will soon be put to press, at Glasgow a 12mo. volume of Sacramental Sermons, by the Rev. Thomas Boston, author of Fourfold State. They are printed from his manuscripts, are equally full as those already published; they were composed in the most vigorous part of his life, and when his views on the gospel were much enlarged.

Also, at Edinburgh, a Collection of Religious Letters from Books and Manuscripts, suited to almost every situation in the Christian Life; selected by John Brown, Minister of the gospel at Whitburn.

In the press, Theron and Aspasio, with a considerable number of important amendments left by Mr. Hervey at his death, but never inserted in any former edition. The latin sentences of foreign divines are also translated and the whole work compared with a copy which the author himself corrected.

SEAMEN'S LETTERS.

The following Letters will be read with the greatest interest, from the consideration that the writers, and their pious brethren were among those who were last in the late fatal shipwreck of the *St. George*.

*H. M. Ship, M——,
Spithead, 1811.*

Sir,

The concern you have for the salvation of the souls of sailors induced me to write to you. Sir, it pleased the Lord in gracious mercy to shine upon me about eighteen months ago. I went to London to see my dear relatives; one of them enquired of my situation in a man of war, and how I liked it. I recollect saying I did not like it, but it was not for the evil on board, but for the confinement. I believe my discourse proved that I had no care for my poor lost soul, therefore it pleased the Lord to direct my relations to give me that valuable book of Mr. John Flavel's *Navigation Spiritualized*, and other pious books and tracts, which to my shame I paid no respect to for some time; once I would cast my eyes upon them, and lay them down again and continued a most rebellious sinner devoted to all kinds of wickedness, until the latter end of May last. It then pleased the Lord to afflict me in my body for three days, which proved very heavy, but precious. My poor dear eyes that I had so often called upon my Maker to deprive me of in the most bitter oaths, were nearly blind under this affliction; my stony hard heart was moved to consider what would have become of my immortal soul if the Lord had called me to judgment. I received my sight about the third day of June, and for this, with shame I ought to express it, I was

almost insensible to so great a mercy.

On the seventh of June, it pleased the Lord to give my sinful heart to consider what a wretch I was, never to lift up my eyes to heaven to return thanks to the Almighty for his mercies to me; that forenoon I took, by the providence of God, that valuable book of Mr. Flavel's into my hand, and I bless the Lord he gave me grace to read it with sincerity; and there I discovered my real state properly described, and when I considered that if the Lord were not merciful he would have recompensed me with eternal death. O how my heart was affected! When I went to my hammock, there I recollected a sermon I heard preached on these words, *we must be born again of water and of the spirit, &c.* then the Lord that night enabled me to groan to him that he would have mercy upon my poor soul, a thing I never before did with sincerity. I tremble when I think of that time. Thanks be to Christ, I can say that he never left me since he spoke pardon and peace to my poor dear soul.

I soon found a warfare, the flesh warring against the spirit, and my own depraved heart bursting forth with horrid suggestions. Being very prone to ridicule others at all opportunities and in all circumstances, when I was unconverted, I expected others would do the same with regard to myself, and then says our spiritual enemy, you will never be able to withstand it; so I began to join with him, concluding that I should not, but thanks be to Christ, who gives me to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and promises whenever he begins a good work in the heart to carry it on until the day

of Christ. I can assuredly say, "It is the Lord alone that performeth all things for me," because it was he in his mercy who begun the work of grace against my own inclination—brought me through many grievous temptations and suffered me not to feel as I expected, so that I can say with the Psalmist, "I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me." Sir, you wished to know the number of pious persons on board; there are six besides myself, who love the Lord Jesus Christ; four marines and two seamen, one of them is a poor black American: I have every reason to believe that God is his whole trust and confidence, and Christ his all and in all; and we can sing—

On shore, on board, 'tis all the same,
O let us call on his great name;
From stem to stern sound forth his fame,
And all his glorious grace proclaim.

All my brethren send their christian love to you, earnestly craving an interest in your prayers.

I remain your humble servant,
for Christ's sake.

*H. M. Ship, St. George,
Baltic, 1811.*

Dear Sir,

I WAS born under poor but religious parents, and often had convictions from my childhood; when I was about fourteen, I saw sin exceedingly sinful, and I could perceive nothing but evil and corruption in my heart and that by nature I was a lost soul, I saw plainly that there was no Saviour but Christ, but through satan and unbelief, I could not see he was mine, which made me exceedingly sorrowful. I was in this frame of mind for some time; soon after providence called me from home, and I stifled conscience, and resisted the holy Spirit, laying

somewhat at ease until I was about seventeen years of age; was then greatly alarmed by the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Cooper and often left his chapel with a wounded spirit, frequently bated in tears, and was glad when it was a dark evening, that I might have my fill of my weeping before I got home; still this was my greatest fear, that it was all hypocrisy, and that I was building upon self-righteousness, and though at this time I lived with a religious family for fear I should act with hypocrisy before I got home I would dry up my tears, and put on a kind of false lightsome spirit, and fearing that I should build upon my own righteousness I was tempted not to be religious at all, lest I should fall under greater condemnation. I was in this frame of mind for several months, until I heard a Gospel Minister preaching very highly of election, and he quoted this scripture, *None shall pluck them out of my hand* but O how did Satan and my own ignorance turn this scripture upside down; after this I concluded that if I lived the life that Paul did, before he was converted that God would make me a monument of mercy, and if I wept as Peter did, yet I could do nothing for myself; so I concluded that it was not of him that willeth but of whom God shewed mercy; this continued a long time, until I read the 139th Psalm, which led me to view the providence of God from my infancy, particularly the last two yeas. I thought I could say from my very heart *Search me and try me and know my heart, and lead me in the way everlasting.* It set me upon my watch, and indeed I hoped it would lead me to his way even a sting, which gave me great co-

solation, but O how soon did sin and sátan rob me of my hopes and suggest to my mind that all I had read, heard, or said was hypocrisy, and that it would rise up in judgement against me. I was so alarmed, that I was afraid to go to the house of prayer, or read or pray myself, for fear it should rise up in judgement against me; this state of mind and the crosses of the world, drove me to sea, where I took to drinking and romancing to stifle my conscience; but it still proved faithful, before I had begun to drink to excess, it was strong, so that I could not do it with ease until I drowned my senses in liquor; but often in the morning the lash of my conscience would be worse than the lash of the cat-o-nine-tails. I continued this life about a year and half, and then I was so alarmed by a dream that I could no longer go on in such presumptuous sins, it made me explain, *O Lord save me or I perish*: I then searched the scriptures and read the Bible, though Satan told me it was too late, because I had trampled on the blood of Christ; but I saw clearly if I stopped where I was I must perish, so I endeavoured to cast myself at his feet, and was determined if I perished to perish there; and I was greatly encouraged to wait on the Lord, believing that the Spirit would come in his appointed time.

It was about a year after, before I had one serious man on board to speak to, and then it pleased God to open the eyes of one that was blind, and exceedingly ignorant, and I thought it was my duty to encourage and instruct him; still Satan was busy, for sometimes he would fill my heart with pride, and suggest that I must be something better than him; and another time he would

tell me that what I said was the fruit of pride. Dear sir, I will tell you my reasons why I fear I am not a child of God. 1st. That it is nearly fourteen years ago, since I was convinced of my lost state by nature, and for these five, years past I have prayed daily that I might have my evidence more clear, but yet I have not received that solid joy that others have; for I have seen some, who four years past took great delight in sin, that now delight only in God, and have great love and zeal to their Redeemer, whilst I cry with David, *My soul cleaveth to the dust*.

2. Because I cannot mention any sermon, or particular time when I was awakened, as others can; I fear it is head knowledge, through being brought up under the sound of the gospel; for surely if it were the work of God, I should feel more love and joy in my heart, for Christ says, *they that are not for me are against me, and they that forsake not all for me are not worthy of me*. How can I say I have forsaken all, when I spend so many hours of the day and scarcely think of God and Eternity? But if I set only an hour apart for serious devotion, I cannot engage in that, without wandering thoughts, thus sin and Satan rob me of my joys.

I still continue, like the children of Baal, halting between two opinions, for I dare not despair, yet am afraid to hope, lest my hope should be false, because my heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Dear Sir, I should be glad of your advice, to instruct and encourage me, unworthy as I am. My friends send with me their christian love to you, expecting soon to hear from you.

I remain yours respectfully,

ORDINATIONS.

Dec. the 25th, 1811, Mr. Joseph Patrick, late of Southill, Bedfordshire, was ordained Pastor of the particular Baptist Church at Fenny Stratford, Bucks. On this occasion the service was introduced by Mr. Thomas Hunt, of *Dunstable*, Beds, with reading and prayer; Mr. George Keely of *Ridgmount* Beds, described the nature of a gospel church, defended the principles of protestant dissent from all human establishments, and asked the usual questions of the Church and Minister; Mr. Wm. Linnell, one of the Deacons, then gave a brief account of the rise and progress of the Church at Fenny Stratford, and Mr. Patrick delivered an explicit declaration of his religious sentiments; Mr. Hunt offered up the ordination prayer, Mr. Wm. Heighton, of *Road*, Northamptonshire, addressed Mr. Patrick from the 2 *Tim.* ii, 15; Mr. Sutcliffe of *Olney* addressed the Church, from *Heb.* xiii, 1. *Let brotherly love continue*, and concluded the solemnity with prayer. The church at Fenny Stratford is but of recent date, being formed in Nov. 1805. It consists of 28 members and Mr. Patrick is the first Pastor.

Dec. 25. 1811. Mr. W. Humphrey was ordained over the baptist church at Isle-Abbots, near Ilminster, Somerset. — Brother Price began by reading 1 *Tim.* iii. and prayed; brother Toms introduced the business of the day asked the usual questions, and received the confession of faith; brother Price prayed the ordination prayer; brother Toms gave the charge from 1 *Tim.* iv. 16; brother Braker addressed the church from *Rom.* xvi. 5, and

concluded in prayer.—It was a good day to many.

Mr. H. was formerly a member of the independent church at South-Petherton, under the pastoral care of our esteemed brother Mr. Herdsman, and began preaching in that connection about the year 1799, but soon after became convinced of believer's baptism, and was publicly baptized in the river at Isle-Abbots, by brother Toms; in consequence of which, others searched the word of God, and were convinced also and baptized, and formed into the above church June 23, 1808; since which five more have been added to their number, and there is a pleasing prospect of further usefulness.

January 1, 1812; Mr. John Evans and Mr. David Evans, baptist ministers of *Maesyberllan*, Breconshire, were set apart to the pastoral office, as assistants to their father and Mr. J. Michal.

Brother David Davies began by reading and prayer; brother James Lewis described the nature of a gospel church, received the confessions and offered up prayer, with laying on hands; brother David Richards gave the charge from Acts xx. 28; brother David Evans of *Doleu* addressed the church from 1 *Thes.* v. 12, 13; brother John Evans of *Penygarn* preached to the congregation from Eph. iii. 19; and concluded.—In the evening brother J. Lewis preached from 2 *Cor.* xii. 9.

Some may think it strange that four ministers are in one church, when many churches have not one; but this church is so extensive that they have the ordinances administered in five different places, every month. Hitherto their attachment to their old ministers will not admit of a separation.

Jan. 1st. 1812. A new meet-
 ing in the baptist connexion, was
 opened at Forton, near Gosport.
 Mr. Ivimey of London, preached
 the morning, from *Gen. xxviii.*
And he called the name of the
place Bethel, &c. In the after-
 noon, Mr. Bulgin of Poole from
Isa. xxiii. 8. Yea in the way of
judgments, &c. Mr. Saffery
 of Salisbury in the evening from
Ps. ix. 3, Thou hast multiplied
the Nation, &c. The devotional
 parts of the services were con-
 ducted by the brethren Giles,
 Penny, Read, Shoveller, Owers,
 Tilly, and Saffery.

Jan. 2. At 5 o'clock in the
 evening, the ministers again met,
 when Mr. T. Tilly was ordained
 pastor of this infant interest.
 Mr. Ivimey read suitable scrip-
 tures and prayed; Mr. Owers of
 Southampton, introduced the so-
 lemn service, asked the usual
 questions, and received Mr.
 Tilly's confession; Mr. Penny
 of Portsea, prayed the ordination
 prayer, with laying on of hands;
 Mr. Miall gave the charge from
Ps. xx, 28, Feed the church of
God, &c.; Mr. Giles of Lymington,
 preached to the church from
Isa. lvi. 1, And some pastors;
 Mr. Neave of Portsea, concluded.
 The gospel has been preached
 out five years in Forton, by
 some of the brethren from the
 Portsea church. The meetings
 were held first in a private house,
 and afterwards in a large store-
 room. In February, 1811, a
 church was formed; and Mr.
 Tilly, who had preached for some
 time with general acceptance,
 was unanimously invited to take
 the pastoral care. The success-
 ful attendant on his ministry having
 rendered the new erection alto-
 gether expedient.

Perhaps it is worthy of remark,
 that more than a century since, a

few baptists from this village
 settled at Portsea, were united in
 the fellowship of the gospel, and
 composed a church which has
 been extended through succeed-
 ing years, into that religious
 society, now under the charge of
 the Rev. D. Miall, whose people
 have at this remote period, visit-
 ed Forton, with the glad tidings
 of salvation, and as if by an act
 of reciprocity, due to their fore-
 fathers, have under the Divine
 patronage, raised this infant in-
 terest, which has already received
 from among them, several of its
 members, and its *first Pastor*.
 Mr. Tilly's prospect is encourag-
 ing; his zeal, and diligence
 afford a large promise of useful-
 ness; and it is hoped he will long
 labour for those to whom he will
 be a messenger of peace; and
 preside over those whose combined
 exertions will best approve, and
 most desirably advance his mi-
 nisterial success. *O Lord send*
now prosperity!

The Wilts and Somerset half-
 yearly district meeting is to be
 held at Melksham, on the first
 Wednesday after Easter-week.—
 Messrs. Porter and Edmonson
 are expected to preach.

BIBLE SOCIETY.

OUR readers will participate in
 our pleasure that the Auxiliary
 Societies in aid of this NOBLE In-
 stitution increase in number and
 importance, faster than our limits
 will admit of their being recorded.
 The influences of the parent So-
 ciety, we are happy to add, is even
 more extensive in other countries
 than in our own. Even the Ro-
 man Catholic clergy, whose pec-
 uliar reproach it had so long been
 that they withdrew the scriptures
 from the eyes of the people, and
 locked them up in an unknown

tongue, "provoked" to holy emulation in this labour of "love," have formed a Bible Society at Ratisbon, an imperial and episcopal city of Germany, and are circulating a very unexceptionable edition of the sacred oracles : and from no quarter, it must be confessed, have more truly Christian communications been received, than from members of that institution.

As a specimen, we select the following letter, addressed, *To all the members of the Bible Society in London.*

"Your love to Christ, and your impartial and comprehensive love to all Christians, who sincerely love our Lord Jesus, are known to me and to many in Germany, I therefore embrace this opportunity of saluting you, (though the least of your brethren) and of thanking you for the lively interest you have taken in our Ratisbon Bible Institution. Our New-Testament goes off rapidly. Indeed, there still exists a hunger in the land after the heavenly manna; and the Lord has promised to satisfy this hunger. The word of God is also a bond of union in Christ: for who hath words of eternal life, but Christ alone? To whom else, therefore shall we go? Whether the translation of the Bible be in latin, german, or english, is immaterial: the great point is, whether we become better; that is, new creatures in Christ, through faith in him, which worketh by love. This is not effected by the Greek, Latin, German, or English letter, but by the Spirit of God, which we receive freely by faith, that we may work the works of grace and love. Surely the hand of the Lord is not shortened. In these times of general fermentation, when all is shaking, and

the vessel of Christ's church appears sinking, he arises with power, cheers his frightened principles, and commands the winds and waves to be still. Let us shew a noble courage; confident in Christ, we may risk everything. To be regarded a fool for his sake is the least we are to expect: who that is favoured with knowledge and love of him will regard this?

'With us matters seem to proceed to such lengths, that we must expect a persecution for faith's sake; but God will give us all needful grace. We encourage each other in faith, prayer, patience, confidence. Assist us with your prayers. We have to fight the same fight for faith, and have one and the same Lord, even our Lord Jesus Christ. United to him, we are united to each other: neither continents nor seas, various forms of government, nor different outward professions of religion, can separate us: all these things pass away, but love abideth. Help us, therefore, to pray, to believe, to suffer, to love; and all will go well: it is a faithful saying, "that many things work together for good to them that love God." With the same sentiments, which I trust you will receive kindly, I express to you my joy and participation in the success of your Bible works. May God give you his Holy Spirit, whom alone the dead letter can quicken."

Nor is this even all. Not only are the records of eternal life thus disseminating far and wide, but the languages into which they have previously been translated, by the work of translation into new tongues has been begun, and proceeding, upon such a scale particularly in the East Indies as is likely, not only very soon

ve the scriptures to numerous nations who had never before had the opportunity or power of reading them; but in the course of a very few years, we are told, according to the present state of progress, to render them into all the known languages of the globe. This great work of translation commenced (to their immortal honor be it spoken) with the Baptist missionaries in Bengal: * but it has since been taken up and carried forward on a much more extensive scale, by others conjointly with them and principally under the patronage of the Bible Society; which now stands pledged to contribute to it 2000*l.* a year, for some years to come. The importance of this work to all fu-

ture generations, as well as to all tribes of mankind, is inconceivable.

PREACHERS' LICENSES.

Sundry instances having occurred, wherein the magistrates have acted upon a decision of the Court of King's Bench, in refusing to admit several students at our academies, and other applicants to take the oaths prescribed by the Toleration Act; many of our correspondents have suggested various hints to the public, and to the parties thus refused to be licensed.

As we understand that three several Rules have been granted by the Court, on cases embracing the different classes concerned, and Lord Ellenborough has signified his wish that these Cases may be fully heard, in order that the law respecting them may be correctly ascertained; we forbear the insertion of any of our correspondent's remarks till the opinion of the court be finally known.

* Mr. Scott observes in a Note, "I gladly take this opportunity to repeat, and on some points correct a statement which I formerly made, and which obtained an unexpected publicity, respecting the senior of these missionaries, Dr. Carey, a man with whom I seem to myself, through the medium of "my own friends and my father's friends," to have been familiar from my early days. As to his not altogether "following with us," I must say, wherever such merit appears, *pro Rutulusve fuit nullo discrimine habeo*. Till 24 years of age, I believe he pursued the humble trade of a shoemaker, in a very obscure situation. After this he was called to the ministry in his own connexion; and, by his sermons and publications, gave the *first impulse* to those more recent missionary exertions, which now so much engage the attention of the Christian world. In 1793 he himself went out to Bengal, where he has since been, in Dr. Buchanan's words, "the Protestant missionary in the north of India, following the steps of the late Mr. Swartz to the south; in oriental and classical learning his superior, and not inferior in laborious study and Christian zeal." There again he gave the *first impulse* to the great work of the translation of the Scriptures now carrying on: and he has himself long been employed, with acknowledged competency, in transcribing the sacred records from the original tongues into Bengalee, Sanscrit, &c. Besides translations of the Scriptures, he is the author of copious grammars of the Sanscrit, Bengalee, and Mahratta languages, (the first 900 pages 4to.) and "of various other useful publications in oriental literature." On the establishment of the College of Fort William by Marquis Wellesly, he was first appointed teacher, and afterwards professor of Bengalee and Sanscrit in that institution: and whoever will be at the pains to turn to Dr. Buchanan's Memoir, p. 82, &c. may there read an official speech of his, (the first delivered by an European in the Shanscrit tongue) made before the Governor General on a public occasion, which for enlightened views and dignified eloquence, could do no discredit to the first characters in Britain. The following statement I lately heard from the mouth of the Secretary to the Baptist mission. "We now expend between 6,000*l.* and 7,000*l.* annually, on the mission and translations: 'one half of which sum is furnished by three individuals— the men who do the work! The missionaries Carey, Marshman, and Ward, earn considerably more than 1,000*l.* a year each, by their literary labours; and they throw the whole into the common fund of the mission!"

Let who will sneer at such men, I must declare with the late eminent Bishop Hurd, when he had but pictured missionaries like these to his imagination, "I am humbled before such virtue, or rather, I adore the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which is able to produce such examples of it, in our degenerate world."

The Hindoo's Petition.

"Come over into *Hindustan* and help us."

Ye sons of Albion's favor'd Isle,
Beneath high heav'n's propitious smile;
Permit a poor despis'd Hindoo,
To offer his requests to you.

Ye are our Lords, and we and ours
Are claimed by you, and reck'ned yours
And though we dwell so far away,
The laws of Britain we obey.

Long have our nations dwelt beneath
The shades of intellectual death;
While you have been supremely blest,
And the true light of life possess.

But you were once as dark as we,
Till the great Spirit set you free;
You worshipp'd Gods of wood and stone,
As we alas! too long have done.

How can you *Christians* take delight
To see us perish in your sight?
O why compel us to retain
Our Idols, to increase your gain? *

Behold how *Gonga* thins our race,
Commisserate our dreadful case;
And let our burning Widows be
The objects of your sympathy.

Relieve us from the cruel *Cast*,
That like a fetter binds us fast;
And will prevent us, till it's broke,
From bowing to the Saviour's yoke.

Long have we sought, but sought in vain,
True, lasting happiness t' obtain;
Send us your *Shasters*, which you say,
Reveal the only certain way.

For sure it would increase your joys,
To meet us in the upper skies;
And hear us tell the tenants there,
How much we owe to British care.

Let not a **HUNDRED MILLIONS** † call,
And perish notwithstanding all;
'Twould be a stain on all your pride,
We beg'd for life, but were **DENIED** !!

Woolwich, Feb. 6th, 1812.

S. I

* "The Temple of Juggernaut (Jaghernaut) is under the immediate controul of the English government, who levy a tax on Pilgrims as a source of revenue, agreeable to the regulation of the British government in Bengal passed April 3rd 1806!! vide Buchanan's Researches. "This fact," says the Eclectic Reviewer, "speaks a language that cannot be misunderstood:" no wonder some of the Proprietors of the India Stock are averse to the propagation of Christianity among the Hindoos; *Sirs ye know that by this [infernal] craft we have our wealth!*

† The population of this vast country is computed to exceed even this vast number.